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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/021,456	12/13/2001	Herbert Parks Hartgrove	PG16044P028IUS	2158

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WOOD, PHILLIPS, KATZ, CLARK & MORTIMER
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EXAMINER

BEFUMO, JENNA LEIGH

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1771

DATE MAILED: 07/28/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/021,456	Applicant(s) HARTGROVE ET AL.	
	Examiner Jenna-Leigh Befumo	Art Unit 1771	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 June 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-7 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 8-15 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 13 December 2001 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
 If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
 a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 1 – 7, drawn to a method of making a flame-retardant non-woven fabric, classified in class 427, subclass 457.
 - II. Claims 8 – 15, drawn to flame-retardant non-woven fabric, classified in class 442, subclass 136.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

2. Inventions I and II are related as process of making and product made. The inventions are distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) that the process as claimed can be used to make other and materially different product or (2) that the product as claimed can be made by another and materially different process (MPEP § 806.05(f)). In the instant case, the non-woven fabric can be produced by adding the binder prior to hydroentangling the nonwoven fabric, instead of after the nonwoven fabric is hydroentangled. Additionally, the non-woven product does not require a dyeing step as recited in claim 6.

3. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

4. During a telephone conversation with Stephen Geimer on July 9, 2003 a provisional election was made with traverse to prosecute the invention of Group II, claims 8 – 15.

Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this Office action. Claims

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1 -- 7 are withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

5. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Drawings

6. The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they include the following reference signs not mentioned in the description: 16, 20, and 26. A proposed drawing correction, corrected drawings, or amendment to the specification to add the reference signs in the description, are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Objections

7. Claim 8 is objected to because of the following informalities: the wording in claim 8, "comprising: a. providing a precursor web" is grammatically awkward. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102/103

8. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

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9. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

10. Claims 8 – 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over May (3,934,285).

May discloses a fire-resistant fabric comprising a fabric which is coated with a fire-resistant polymer binder (abstract). May teaches the fire-resistant coating may be applied to fabrics used in beddings, such as tickings, pads, and covers, or similar materials where fire-resistance is required, such as pillow covers and upholstery (column 11, lines 3 – 10). The coating is applied by knife coating, spraying, or other modes of application (column 2, line 68 – column 3, line 1). Additionally, the coating is applied to the entire fabric at a weight of 2 to 7 ounces per square yard (column 2, lines 60 – 66).

In Example 16, May teaches that the coating is applied to a spunlace fabric weighing 1.2 ounces per square yard (column 10, lines 20 – 35). The spunlace fabric is produced by hydroentangling a precursor fabric producing a predetermined, repeating pattern in the fabric as taught in various disclosures including Evans et al. (3,485,706). This pattern would inherently be a three-dimensional pattern as taught by Evans, which May incorporates by reference to describe the structure of the spunlace fabric. Finally, May teaches the 1.2 ounce fabric has a 2.5 ounce per square yard coating applied to the fabric, producing a total basis weight of 3.7 ounces per square yard (column 10, line 34). And since May teaches the coating can have a weight as

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low as 2 ounces per square yard, then the basis weight of the finished fabric could be as low as 3.2 ounces per square yard.

With regard to the recitations in claims 11 and 14 that the fabric is used as a wall covering or window covering these recitations are given no patentable weight at this time, since it has been held that a recitation with respect to the manner in which a claimed product is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed product from a prior art product satisfying the claimed structural limitation. *Ex parte Masham*, 2 USPQ2d 1647 (1987).

Although May does not explicitly teach the limitations abrasion resistance, vertical flame testing and tensile strength, it is reasonable to presume that said limitations are inherent to the invention. Support for said presumption is found in the use of similar materials (i.e. three-dimensional, hydroentangled fabric and fire-resistant binder) and in the similar production steps (i.e. coating the binder on the hydroentangled fabric) used to produce the fire-resistant material. The burden is upon the Applicant to prove otherwise. *In re Fitzgerald*, 205 USPQ 594. In the alternative, the claimed limitations would obviously have been provided by the process disclosed by May. Note *In re Best*, 195 USPQ 433, footnote 4 (CCPA 1977) as to the providing of this rejection under 35 USC 103 in addition to the rejection made above under 35 USC 102. Therefore, claims 8 – 15 are rejected.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jenna-Leigh Befumo whose telephone number is (703) 605-1170. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday (8:00 - 5:30).

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Terrel Morris can be reached on (703) 308-2414. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9310 for regular communications and (703) 872-9311 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.

Jenna-Leigh Befumo
July 21, 2003



CHERYL A. JUSKA
PRIMARY EXAMINER